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ABSTRACT

This final report summarizes the major Local/State Bilingual Program evaluation findings for the Austin Independent School District around four topics: (1) academic achievement; (2) the new kindergarten and first-grade Limited English Proficiency (LEP) exit criteria; (3) bilingual teacher recruitment; and (4) what can be learned from this year's evaluation. The overall pattern of Hispanic LEP pupil achievement was up from last year's levels in reading, language and mathematics computation, but still dramatically below their English-monolingual peers. Vietnamese LEP students' performance was progressing toward or exceeding the national norm. Lowest LEP student achievement gains were in reading. Except for students at Allison and Becker in the Schoolwide Project (low pupil-to-teacher ratios), Chapter 1 programs showed no achievement benefits for LEP students. The District's new exit criteria for kindergarteners and first graders helped stabilize the previous "entry-exit-reentry" problem. Bilingually-endorsed teacher recruitment has been quite successful, but many more teachers will have to be recruited if the state does not agree to letting English as a Second Language-endorsed teachers serve English-dominant and balanced-bilingual LEP students. (BS)

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Local/State Bilingual

FINAL REPORT

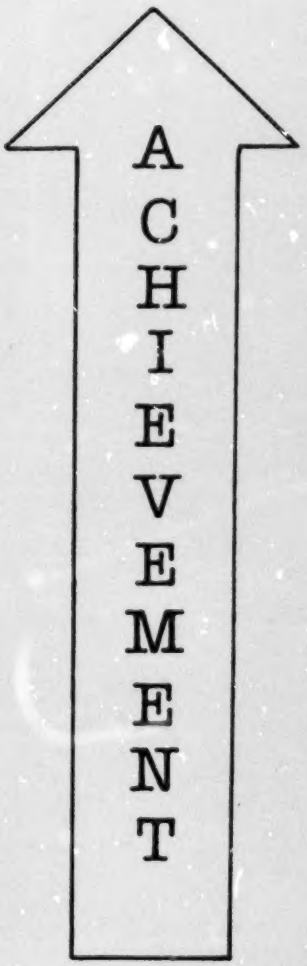
Spring 1984

83.64

SUMMARY REPORT

Project Title: Local/State Bilingual

Contact Person: Jonathan J. Curtis



Major Positive Findings:

1. In comparison to last year, LEP performance is up in reading, language, and mathematics computation. However, there is still a dramatic gap between the academic performance of LEP students and their English-monolingual peers.

2. Vietnamese LEP student performance in math computation, language, and reading is either progressing toward or exceeding the national norm.

3. LEP students in Allison and Becker's Schoolwide Projects (low pupil-to-teacher schools) are outperforming their other Chapter 1 and non-Chapter 1 LEP peers at certain grade levels and content areas. At no grade level and in no content area do their counterparts demonstrate performance superior to theirs.

4. The District's new exit criteria for kindergarten and first graders have helped to stabalize the "entry-exit-reentry" problem associated with the previous criteria.

Major Findings Requiring Action:

1. LEP students typically make their lowest gains (about 8 to 9 months/year) in reading. This results in an ever-increasing gap between these students and the national average.

2. The District's efforts to recruit bilingually endorsed teachers has been quite successful. However, we will need to recruit far more if the state does not recognize the legitimacy of the District's contention that English-dominant and balanced-bilingual LEP pupils can be served by ESL-endorsed rather than bilingually endorsed teachers.

3. Except for the students at Allison and Becker, there is no detectable achievement benefit to LEP students from being served by the Chapter 1 Program.

Evaluation Summary:

This section summarizes the major Local/State Bilingual Program findings and is organized around the following topics.

- Academic Achievement
- New Kindergarten and First-Grade LEP Exit Criteria
- Bilingual Teacher Recruitment
- What Can We Learn From This Year's Evaluation?

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is the primary focus of educational programs. They are effective or not based primarily on the academic performance of participating students.

Hispanic Achievement

The overall pattern of Hispanic LEP pupil achievement is up from the levels attained last year. This means that the LEP population in AISD is not as far behind local and national averages compared to past years' LEP populations. However, there is still a dramatic gap between the academic performance of LEP students and their English-monolingual peers. Performance of the Spanish-dominant LEP students in reading, language, and math computation illustrates this point (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). The 1984 Spanish-dominant LEP students outperformed their 1983 counterparts in every grade level and content area examined except at the eighth-grade level in language and math. Of 24 comparisons made, 22 favor the 1984 students. Exceptions to the overall pattern lie primarily with the English-dominant and balanced-bilingual students particularly in the area of language. Attachment 1 identifies where these exceptions occur.

Figures 1-3 also illustrate the basic pattern of achievement across the grades. The pattern is of an ever-widening gap between the national norm and LEP students that is especially prominent in reading and language from grade 3 on. It appears as though little ground is lost until that grade. In math computation, the ever-widening gap can also be noted, but it is much less pronounced. Math computation is the area of the standardized tests requiring the least English Language skills. Thus, LEP student performance in math computation provides a "picture" of how these students might perform if they were English proficient. In math computation these students are quite close to the national average.

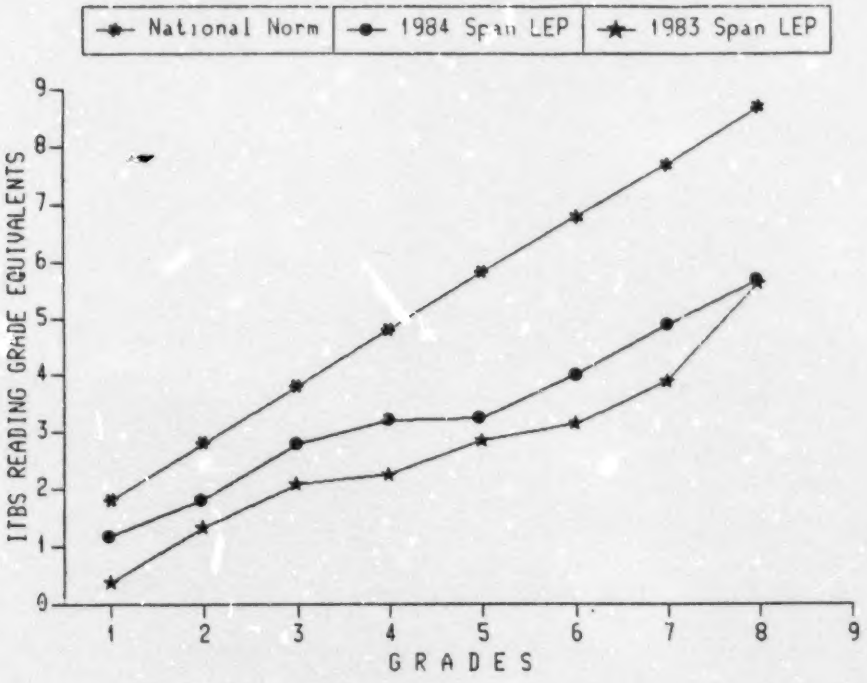


Figure 1: 1983 AND 1984 ITBS READING GRADE EQUIVALENTS FOR SPANISH-DOMINANT LEP STUDENTS.

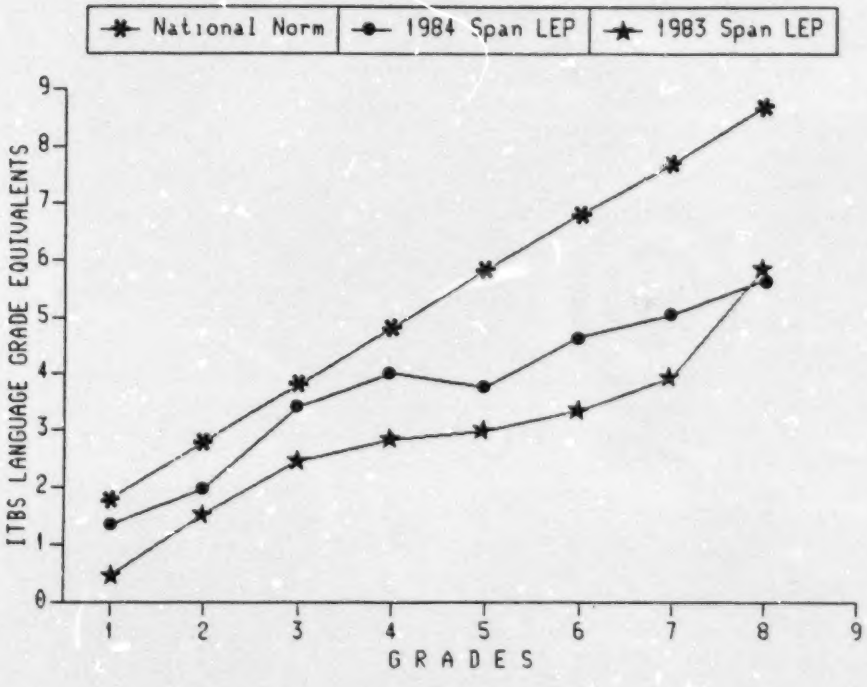


Figure 2: 1983 AND 1984 ITBS LANGUAGE GRADE EQUIVALENTS FOR SPANISH-DOMINANT LEP STUDENTS.

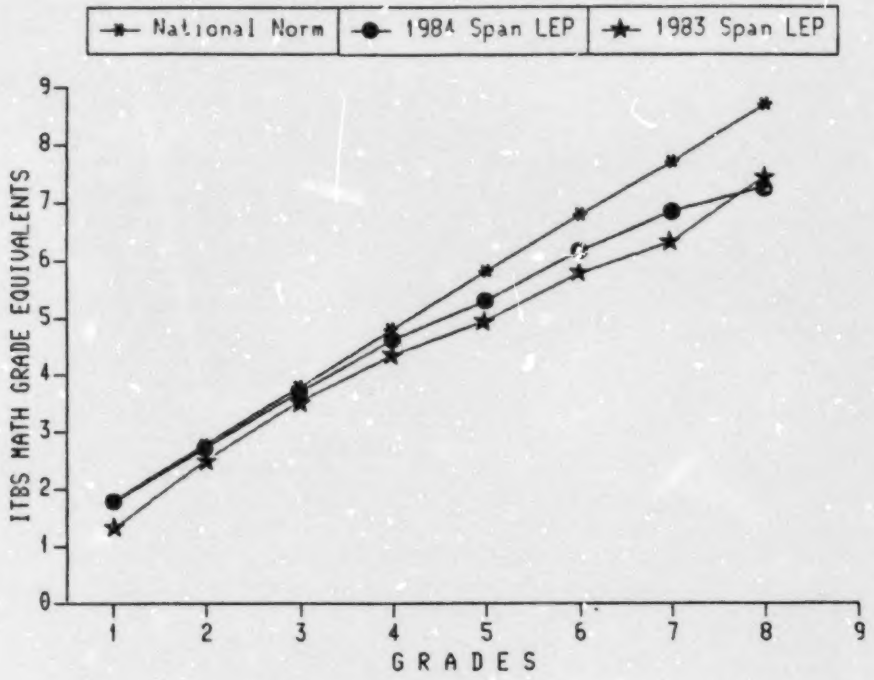


Figure 3: 1983 AND 1984 ITBS MATH GRADE EQUIVALENTS FOR SPANISH-DOMINANT LEP STUDENTS.

Vietnamese Achievement

In math computation, language, and reading, Vietnamese LEP student performance is either progressing toward or exceeding the national norm. The only exceptions to this trend, over the grades examined (2-8), is in the area of reading for second and eighth grades and in language at the seventh grade. Of the 24 comparisons made, all but 3 show gains from 1983 to 1984 of over a year. In 11 of the 24 comparisons, Vietnamese performance is already above grade level and still rising at a rate of more than a year's growth per year. Under these circumstances, much of the Vietnamese LEP population will become English proficient rather rapidly.

Chapter 1 Achievement

Chapter 1 students are provided special instructional services that are designed to enhance their language and reading achievement. Although there is no equivalent group with which to compare, non-Chapter 1 LEP students is the best available. These students from higher socio-economic status families have home background characteristics that may be more likely to encourage academic learning than is true for Chapter 1 pupils. Thus, finding achievement differences favoring Chapter 1 students would suggest a strong Chapter 1 effect.

Comparison of Chapter 1 LEP with non-Chapter 1 LEP was done using covariate analysis so that adjustments associated with differences in pretest scores could be made. Allison and Becker students were removed from the comparisons because they represent a very special population whose achievement performance is examined separately. None of the comparisons conducted favored the Chapter 1 LEP students. The non-Chapter 1 LEP students' achievement was superior to the LEP Chapter 1 students in language at the second-grade level, in math at the third-grade level, and in reading and math at the fourth-grade level. No other significant differences were detected between the groups.

Low Pupils-to-Teacher Ratio Schools Performance

Comparison of LEP students in Schoolwide Project Schools, Allison and Becker (schools with low pupil-to-teacher ratios) with other Chapter 1 LEP students, indicates that the Allison and Becker pupils are doing better than their Chapter 1 counterparts in language achievement at the second-, third-, and sixth-grade levels and in math at the second- and third-grade levels. At no grade level and in no achievement area are the Chapter 1 students outperforming the Allison and Becker students. Analysis of covariance was used to adjust for possible achievement differences on the pretest (1983 ITBS). Kindergarten and first-grade students were not included because appropriate pretest data are not available from the ITBS.

Non-Chapter 1 students tend to come from homes where the parents are better educated and may provide more learning assistance to their children. Thus, if pupils at Allison and Becker outperform their non-Chapter 1 LEP peers at any level, it provides strong evidence for the effectiveness of the Schoolwide Project Schools. Comparisons were made and the Allison and Becker LEP students demonstrated superior performance in reading at third and sixth grades and in math at second and third grades. At no grade level and in no achievement area were the Allison and Becker students surpassed in their achievement by the non-Chapter 1 LEP pupils.

Why are Allison and Becker more effective in teaching LEP students? Better teachers can be hypothesized and that may be the reason. However, a stronger alternate hypothesis is that LEP students do better there because **they get more individual attention.** That is, class sizes at those schools are much smaller than anywhere else in the District. They are supposed to serve no more than 15 students. This ratio is substantially lower than the District's average of 23 to 24 students per teacher.

New Kindergarten and First-Grade LEP Exit Criteria

When the 1981 bilingual law and its associated regulations were enacted they contained criteria that were to be used to determine when a child was to exit LEP status and move into regular instruction. Common criteria were established for students in grades 2-12. Kindergarten and first-grade criteria were not only different from the common criteria of grades 2-12, but the criteria were much simpler to attain. This situation, coupled with another regulation requiring districts to review the status of exited students for two years following their exit, created a situation where LEP students are likely to exit in kindergarten or first grade only to reenter at the second grade when more stringent criteria are applied. Such a situation often leads to inappropriate placement of the child for instructional purposes and to confusion and frustration of parents and District staff.

To alleviate this situation, the criteria used for grades 2-12 were applied to first graders in AISD. No attempt to convey the grades 2-12 criteria has been made here because of their complexity. They may be found in the Local/State Bilingual Program Technical Report, publication 83.31, Attachment VI-4. For kindergartners, the criteria for exiting were changed from an easily attained score (79) on the Primary Acquisition of Language (PAL) test to the more rigorus requirment of a language score at the 50%ile or greater on the districtwide administered Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the effect of the change in criteria. The number of exits at kindergarten and first grade is much lower after implementation of the new criteria than it was earlier. Futhermore, the number of pupils reentering LEP status at first and second grades in 1984 is about 1/4 the number of reentries in 1983. From these data, it appears that the new criteria are functioning as they were designed to--there are fewer LEP student exits who later reenter.

GRADE	K	1
# LEP Pupils Exited in 1982	93	131
*		
# LEP Pupils Exited in 1983	17	51
# LEP Pupils Exited in 1984	22	50

*New criteria implemented.

Figure 4: NO. OF K & 1 LEP PUPILS EXITED FROM LEP STATUS SINCE THE 1981 BILINGUAL LAW.

GRADE	K	1	2
# LEP Pupils Reentered in 1982	0	0	0
*			
# LEP Pupils Reentered in 1983	-	19	32
# LEP Pupils Reentered in 1984	-	4	8

*New criteria implemented.

Figure 5: NO. OF 1ST AND 2ND GRADE PUPILS WHO REENTERED LEP STATUS.

Bilingual Teacher Recruitment

Bilingual education is required by state law when 20 or more elementary LEP children of a given language are enrolled in the District at any specific elementary grade level. Thus, availability of bilingually endorsed teachers is critical to compliance with State law. Under this year's distribution of LEP students, a bilingual program is required only for Hispanics (see Figure 6). By choice, a bilingual program is also maintained in AISD for the Vietnamese who represent the second largest LEP population of the District.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
Spanish	242	356	288	261	252	202	156	102	88	64	31	19	12	2,073
Vietnamese	17	15	14	12	13	10	13	16	9	17	6	6	2	150
Cambodian	2	3	1	4	3	6	4	3	2	3	1	2	0	34
Laotian	2	3	2	0	2	2	7	0	4	4	3	0	0	29
Chinese	4	4	0	1	4	3	0	2	5	2	2	0	0	27
All Others	19	16	11	9	9	11	11	5	4	2	7	6	6	116
Total	286	397	316	287	283	234	191	128	112	92	50	33	20	2,429

Figure 6: SPRING 1984 LEP STUDENT COUNT BY GRADE AND LANGUAGE.

The Texas Education Agency contends that all Hispanic LEP students, even those who are English dominant, must be served by bilingually endorsed teachers. Under the 1983-84 distribution of the 1,757 elementary Hispanic LEP students, 315 bilingually endorsed teachers would be required to serve all of these students on a full-time basis. The projection is based upon the assumption that no more than 10 LEP students (District policy) would be served by a teacher and that even a single LEP child at a given grade and school would also be served by a bilingually endorsed teacher.

The District contends that English-dominant and balanced-bilingual LEP students can be appropriately served by teachers with English as a Second Language (ESL) rather than bilingual endorsements. If the English-dominant and balanced-bilingual Hispanic LEP pupils do not have to be served by bilingually endorsed teachers, 186 bilingually endorsed teachers at the appropriate schools and grade levels could serve all the Spanish-dominant LEP students in the District under the present distribution of these students.

Can the District meet the needs of its Spanish-dominant LEP students for bilingually endorsed teachers? If the State recognizes the legitimacy of the District's contention that English-dominant and balanced-bilingual LEP students can be served by ESL-endorsed rather than bilingually endorsed teachers, the District should be able to provide bilingual education to all its Spanish-dominant LEP pupils with the bilingually endorsed teachers that are presently employed. However, if the District's contention is rejected, additional bilingually endorsed teachers will be needed, the capacity of the Bilingual Center schools will have to be expanded and teaming, where a bilingual teacher serves LEP children other than her own for a portion of the day, will have to take place to a greater extent than in the past.

The District has made and continues to make a major effort to recruit bilingual teachers so that its LEP students might be better served (see Figure 7).

	Spring		
	1982	1983	1984
Number of Regular Bilingually Endorsed Teachers	193	207	252
Gain		9%	22%

Figure 7: NUMBER OF REGULAR BILINGUALLY ENDORSED TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY THE DISTRICT.

What Can We Learn From This Year's Evaluation?

- The overall pattern of Hispanic limited English proficient (LEP) student performance is up from the levels attained at the same grade levels last year in all content areas examined; reading, language, and math computation. Minor deviations from this pattern are associated primarily with balanced-bilingual and English-dominant LEP students in the area of language.

- Academic progress for Vietnamese LEP pupils is strong. They are 7 to 14 months above grade level in math. Their performance in language is also above grade level except at the sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade levels. In reading, the gap between the national norm and Vietnamese performance is closing at every grade level except second and eighth.

- Austin's experiment with low pupil-to-teacher ratio schools (Allison and Becker) appears to benefit LEP student achievement, at least at the second-, third-, and sixth-grade levels. Furthermore, they were not outperformed by LEP students at other schools at any grade level considered (2-6).

- The District's new criteria for exiting LEP students at the kindergarten and first-grade levels have helped stabilize the "enter-exit-reenter" syndrome particularly associated with kindergarten and first-grade students.

- The District's efforts to recruit elementary bilingual teachers are showing success. The number of bilingual teachers employed has risen 22% from last year to this, representing a gain of 45 teachers. As a result, the logistics required to serve Hispanic LEP students appropriately as required by law should be much simpler.

- The Texas Education Agency contends that Hispanic English-dominant LEP students must be served by a bilingually endorsed teacher. The District contends that English is the dominant language of these students, and therefore, a bilingually endorsed teacher is unnecessary. If the State does not recognize the legitimacy of Austin's contention, the District will be faced with the need for a substantial increase in the number of bilingually endorsed teachers employed.

- There is no detectable achievement benefit to LEP students served by the Chapter 1 Program exept for the students at Allison and Becker. For the most part, they are progressing at a rate comparable to their non-Chapter 1 LEP pupil counterparts. However, the non-Chapter 1 LEP student achievement was superior to Chapter 1 LEP pupils in language at the second-grade level, in math at the third-grade level, and in reading and math at the fourth-grade level.

For the interested reader, a more detailed report of the evaluation procedures and associated findings may be found in the technical report entitled SYSTEMWIDE EVALUATION: 1983-84 Technical Report, Special Populations, Volume 2, Appendix I, Publication No. 83.31.

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ITBS MEAN GRADE EQUIVALENTS FOR SPANISH-DOMINANT, BALANCED-BILINGUAL, AND ENGLISH-DOMINANT LEP PUPILS

ITBS SCALE	STATISTICS	GRADE 1		GRADE 2		GRADE 3		GRADE 4		GRADE 5		GRADE 6		GRADE 7		GRADE 8	
		1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984
READING																	
Spanish-Dom	$\bar{X}$	.39	1.18	1.32	1.83	2.09	2.81	2.27	3.22	2.87	3.26	3.14	4.00	3.91	4.88	5.65	5.69
	N	*141*	*116*	* 89*	* 75*	* 57*	* 55*	* 36*	* 54*	* 31*	* 28*	* 26*	* 19*	* 28*	* 30*	* 35*	* 27*
	(SE)	(.06)	(.06)	(.11)	(.08)	(.18)	(.13)	(.17)	(.14)	(.20)	(.13)	(.31)	(.17)	(.51)	(.09)	(.35)	(.17)
Balanced-Bil	$\bar{X}$	1.16	1.38	2.07	2.00	2.86	2.97	3.74	3.54	4.12	4.14	4.65	5.00	4.96	5.35	5.89	6.07
	N	* 61*	* 65*	* 64*	* 74*	* 72*	* 98*	* 60*	* 91*	* 45*	* 93*	* 42*	* 65*	* 25*	* 33*	* 23*	* 27*
	(SE)	(.10)	(.09)	(.08)	(.07)	(.11)	(.08)	(.12)	(.10)	(.15)	(.10)	(.17)	(.11)	(.34)	(.20)	(.27)	(.25)
English-Dom	$\bar{X}$	1.24	1.38	2.25	1.98	2.81	2.89	3.24	3.38	4.07	4.02	4.39	4.82	5.09	5.18	6.50	6.41
	N	* 91*	* 76*	* 81*	* 98*	* 44*	* 98*	* 33*	* 63*	* 34*	* 50*	* 25*	* 34*	* 31*	* 16*	* 19*	* 15*
	(SE)	(.08)	(.08)	(.08)	(.06)	(.10)	(.07)	(.17)	(.10)	(.14)	(.13)	(.16)	(.15)	(.11)	(.16)	(.29)	(.20)
LANGUAGE																	
Spanish-Dom	$\bar{X}$	.45	1.35	1.54	1.99	2.48	3.42	2.85	4.00	2.99	3.77	3.35	4.66	3.94	5.05	5.83	5.64
	N	*141*	*113*	* 89*	* 73*	* 57*	* 54*	* 36*	* 49*	* 31*	* 22*	* 26*	* 16*	* 28*	* 29*	* 35*	* 26*
	(SE)	(.07)	(.08)	(.14)	(.12)	(.22)	(.18)	(.23)	(.17)	(.30)	(.19)	(.39)	(.28)	(.54)	(.17)	(.35)	(.16)
Balanced-Bil	$\bar{X}$	1.23	1.58	2.37	2.31	3.42	3.73	3.94	4.18	4.92	4.80	5.08	5.68	5.18	5.51	6.48	6.47
	N	* 61*	* 67*	* 64*	* 70*	* 72*	* 97*	* 68*	* 91*	* 45*	* 90*	* 42*	* 66*	* 25*	* 32*	* 23*	* 23*
	(SE)	(.13)	(.11)	(.14)	(.12)	(.15)	(.11)	(1.48)	(.11)	(.17)	(.12)	(.17)	(.15)	(.38)	(.16)	(.34)	(.26)
English-Dom	$\bar{X}$	1.50	1.60	2.64	2.16	3.60	3.55	3.99	4.04	4.58	4.55	5.28	5.32	5.02	5.93	6.37	6.61
	N	* 91*	* 76*	* 81*	*100*	* 44*	* 95*	* 33*	* 61*	* 34*	* 47*	* 25*	* 34*	* 31*	* 18*	* 18*	* 16*
	(SE)	(.09)	(.11)	(.12)	(.09)	(.14)	(.10)	(.17)	(.11)	(.22)	(.14)	(.30)	(.20)	(.38)	(.26)	(.32)	(.33)
MATH COMPUT																	
Spanish-Dom	$\bar{X}$	1.30	1.78	2.51	2.74	3.56	3.73	4.36	4.63	4.94	5.29	5.79	6.17	6.34	6.86	7.45	7.26
	N	*141*	*142*	* 89*	* 88*	* 57*	* 61*	* 36*	* 54*	* 31*	* 36*	* 26*	* 29*	* 28*	* 30*	* 35*	* 31*
	(SE)	(.08)	(.04)	(.11)	(.08)	(.16)	(.10)	(.13)	(.12)	(.25)	(.14)	(.37)	(.15)	(.48)	(.21)	(.46)	(.21)
Balanced-Bil	$\bar{X}$	1.62	1.82	2.71	2.88	3.59	3.78	4.19	4.47	5.61	5.17	6.06	6.49	7.23	6.87	7.59	7.61
	N	* 61*	* 60*	* 64*	* 69*	* 72*	* 96*	* 68*	* 82*	* 45*	* 83*	* 42*	* 57*	* 25*	* 25*	* 23*	* 21*
	(SE)	(.09)	(.07)	(.08)	(.07)	(.13)	(.07)	(.10)	(.08)	(.14)	(.11)	(.15)	(.13)	(.20)	(.23)	(.27)	(.30)
English-Dom	$\bar{X}$	1.62	1.81	2.65	2.74	3.52	3.69	4.01	4.40	4.78	4.90	5.80	5.84	6.75	7.06	7.50	7.77
	N	* 91*	* 57*	* 81*	* 82*	* 44*	* 78*	* 33*	* 47*	* 34*	* 38*	* 25*	* 34*	* 31*	* 16*	* 18*	* 12*
	(SE)	(.06)	(.60)	(.09)	(.06)	(.13)	(.07)	(.16)	(.11)	(.22)	(.12)	(.17)	(.16)	(.27)	(.25)	(.33)	(.37)

$\bar{X}$: Average score.
N: Number of pupil's scores used to calculate the average and standard error.
(SE): Standard error.

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